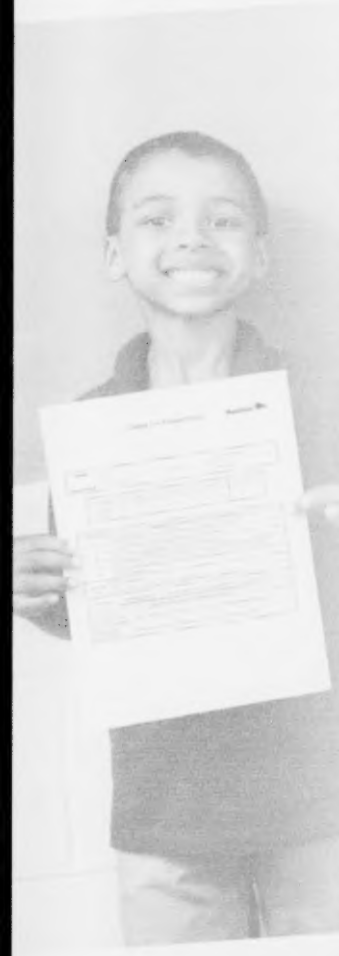
Education
MANITOBA

Volume 11
Number 1
October 2012

Published by School Programs Division (Kindergarten to Grade 12) of Manitoba Education

The Manitoba Provincial Report Card
A Message from the Minister

Two years ago, Premier Selinger announced that Manitoba would be developing a new parent-friendly provincial report card. It would provide parents with clear information about their children's achievement in school, along with teacher comments that would help to improve learning and give parents quality information they can use to help their children succeed in school.



This announcement was the beginning of a journey that brought together our educational partners within a new structure called the Oversight Committee. These partners included the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils, the Manitoba Association of School Business Officials, The Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, the Manitoba School Boards Association, and the Manitoba Teachers' Society. This collaborative committee provided feedback and direction throughout the report card development.

As a result of this process, report card templates were developed and are currently being voluntarily implemented in hundreds of schools across the province. As a result, these templates include such features as an easily understandable grading scale on the front page, student achievement being reported in Grades 1 to 8 based on distinct categories of knowledge and skill within each subject, and the separate reporting of student learning behaviour. On the Grades 9 to 12 report card, there is also a chart that tracks student progress towards graduation.

In addition, the new provincial report card includes clear methods for indicating to parents when students are following academic programming that differs from grade-level programming. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) or English as an Additional Language (EAL) is indicated if the expectations for students are different from the grade-level curriculum in a subject. In the case of an IEP designation, this may be due to a variety of factors, such as transiency, gaps in learning, or a cognitive disability. In the case of an EAL designation, a student may be addressing some subject area learning at the grade level, but the focus of instruction is on language learning.

This project has been characterized by collaboration, partnerships, and discussion that have benefited us all immensely. I am confident that in the capable hands of Manitoba's educators, these efforts will culminate in a result that fulfills the initial purpose of this initiative—a common report card that is functional and understandable, and that informs parents about where their children are excelling and where they need more support.

I want to express my gratitude to all involved for their diligence, professionalism, and care, and for doing what is best for students and what is most informative for parents at each stage of their work on this initiative. I know that this commitment will continue among the amazing teachers and administrators who work with our children each day as the report card is implemented in school divisions across the province.

Nancy Allan
Minister of Education

Inside

Curriculum Update 2
Distance Learning—What's New! 2
Recommended Resources for K–12 Classrooms 3
The Manitoba Report Card: An Opportunity for Strong Partnerships 4
MTBB Makes Quality Learning Resources Available to Teachers 5
Learning Another Language: Manitoba's Renewal Strategy 6
Using GIS in Manitoba Classrooms 7
The Aboriginal Education Research Forum 2012: A Continuing Story of Success 8
MERN Research Profile: Narrowing the Education Gap 9
Piloting the New Report Card at Sister MacNamara School 10

Curriculum Update

Several projects are underway to develop, revise, and implement curricula for the Kindergarten to Grade 12 English Program. The Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch provides workshops for curriculum implementation and related professional learning. Information about workshops is posted on the workshop registration system at < http://web16.gov.mb.ca/workshops/>. For a list of compulsory curricula and stock numbers for ordering from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau, refer to <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/csai.html>.

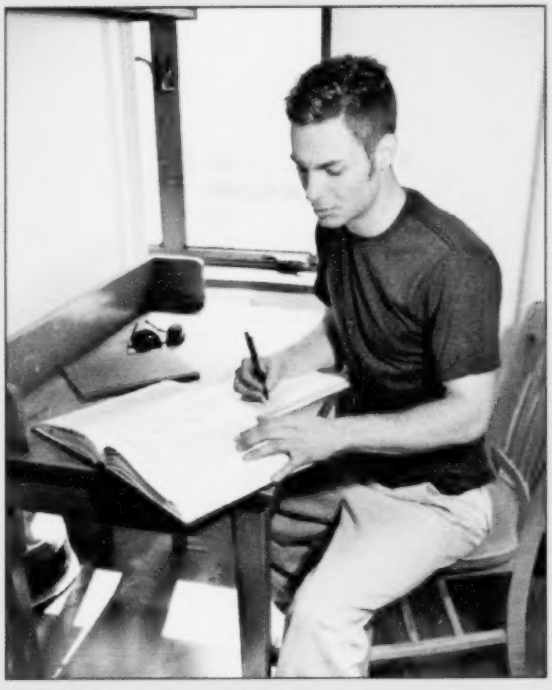
Curriculum	Voluntary Implementation Dates	System-Wide Implementation Dates
Dance Education 9–12 Drama Education 9–12 Music Education 9–12 Visual Arts Education 9–12	2013–2014	2014–2015
Grade 12 Applied Mathematics	2010–2012	2012–2013
Grade 12 Essential Mathematics	2010–2012	2012–2013
Grade 12 Pre-Calculus Mathematics	2010–2012	2012–2013
Reading is Thinking Framework*	2012–2013	2013–2014
Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability	2011–2013	2013–2014
K–Grade 12 English as an Additional Language (EAL) / Literacy, Academics, and Language (LAL) Curriculum Framework	2012–2013	2013–2014
English as an Additional Language Stages 1–2: Senior Years	2013–2014	2014–2015
English as an Additional Language – Across the Curriculum – Stage 3: Senior Years	2014–2015	2015–2016
English as an Additional Language: Literacy Academics and Language 1 (Grade 9)	2011–2013	2013–2014
English as an Additional Language: Literacy Academics and Language 2 (Grade 9)	2011–2014	2014–2015
TVE: Carpentry 9–12**	2012–2015	2013–2016
TVE: Design Drafting 9–12**	2012–2015	2013–2016
TVE: Print Media 9–12**	2012–2015	2013–2016
TVE: Culinary Arts 9–12**	2012–2015	2013–2016
TVE: Hairstyling 10–12**	2012–2014	2013–2015
TVE: Automotive Technology 9–12**	2012–2015	2013–2016
TVE: Sustainable Energy 9–12***	2012–2013	2013–2014
TVE: Welding Technology 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Baking and Pastry Arts 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Nail Technology 10–12**	2013–2015	2014–2016
TVE: Skin Care Technology 10–12**	2013–2015	2014–2016
TVE: Heavy Duty Mechanic 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Machine Shop 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Metals and Aerospace Technology 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Refrigeration and Air Conditioning 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Dental Assisting 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Dental Technology 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Horticulture and Landscaping 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017
TVE: Jewellery Arts 9–12**	2013–2016	2014–2017

Distance Learning– What's New!

The following new ISO courses are now available. Order a teacher reference copy today or register students in these courses.

- Grade 9 Spanish
- *Mathématiques au quotidien, 10e année*
- Grade 10 Career Development
- Grade 10 Electricity/Electronics
- Grade 10 Science
- Grade 11 History of Canada
- Grade 11 Essential Mathematics
- *Éducation physique et Éducation à la santé, 11e année*
- *Éducation physique et Éducation à la santé, 12e année*
- Grade 12 Biology
- Grade 12 Psychology

For more information, contact the Distance Learning Unit
Telephone: 204-325-1700
or 1-800-465-9915
Email: distance.learning@gov.mb.ca
Website: www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/dl/iso/index.html



* *Schools will have access to the Reading is Thinking Framework province-wide in the 2012/2013 school year in order to begin professional learning and planning for its implementation.*

** *Implementation of the Grades 10 to 12 courses will follow one grade per year for each subsequent year.*

*** *Voluntary implementation of the Grades 9 to 11 Sustainable Energy courses will take place in September 2012.*

TVE = Technical Vocational Education

Recommended Resources for K–12 Classrooms

By Donna Pletz Passey
Learning Resources Unit, Manitoba Education

Manitoba Education has recently begun the Continuous Learning Resources Review Process, a new initiative to suggest recommended resources for K–12 classrooms.

In the past, learning resources such as published textbooks were reviewed and recommended by Manitoba Education after new curricula were created. This new process allows the Department to review textual or digital resources as they are published or produced. This means teachers will be able to include recommended resources in their classrooms in a timely manner.

The outcome will be a current list of vetted, quality recommended learning resources that will be available through the Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTBB). Textbooks such as *Discovery Science* and *Pearson Science* have recently been recommended, as have web-based resources such as *Expert Space* and *World Book Classroom* and kits such as *National Geographic Science*. For a complete list of recommended science resources for the classroom, please go to <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/learnres/shortlists.html> or visit the MTBB catalogue at <www.mtbb.mb.ca/catalogue/en/>.

In June of 2012, teachers were nominated by their divisional superintendents to participate in a two-year process to evaluate learning resources for the following courses:

Grades 11–12 Biology
Grades 11–12 Chemistry
Grades 9–12 Dance
Grades 9–12 Drama
Grades 9–12 Music
Grades 9–12 Phys. Ed/Health
Grades 11–12 Physics
Grades 9–12 Visual Arts

More curricular areas and grades will be added to the review list as part of the staggered implementation strategy.

Teacher evaluators will work with the Learning Resources Unit of Manitoba Education to review materials that publishers and developers formally submit. The teachers will receive credit hours toward the Administrator's Certification through the Professional Certification Unit at Manitoba Education. For further information, please visit <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/learnres/index.html>.

Stay tuned for more news about learning resources review results and how you too can participate in evaluating new resources for the classroom by subscribing to RSS feeds from Manitoba Education at <http://web16.gov.mb.ca/ss/user/controller?action=subscribe>.

For more information, contact

Donna Pletz Passey
Coordinator, Learning Resources Unit
Telephone: 204-945-7620
Toll-free 1-800-282-8069, ext. 7620
Email: donna.passey@gov.mb.ca

The Manitoba Report Card: An Opportunity for Strong Partnerships

By Phyllis Geddert and Ken Clark
Assessment Unit, Manitoba Education

Meaningful partnerships among parents, students, and teachers are at the heart of a quality education. The new Manitoba report card plays an important part in strengthening student-parent-teacher relationships and building strong partnerships for learning in Manitoba.

The new provincial report card will communicate to parents, in parent-friendly language, how well a student is learning in the various subject areas. It will report on students' academic achievement and learning behaviours, as well as provide comments about students' individual strengths, challenges, and next steps. The provincial report card is part of the larger, ongoing communications system between teachers and parents.

The reporting of academic achievement in Grades 1 to 8 is based on students' demonstrated understanding and application of concepts and skills within each "subject category." Subject categories are areas of knowledge and skill within each subject that reflect the goals of the curriculum. These subject categories help to identify students' strengths, as well as areas for improvement related to their knowledge, applied skills, and critical and creative thinking processes in each subject. These categories will also help parents understand their children's achievement and how to support their learning. Although these categories are not included in the high school report card, they may be used by teachers to guide student assessment and evaluation to help strengthen their connections to curricula.

In Grades 1 to 8, a scale of 1 to 4 (with 4 as the highest level of achievement) is used for reporting academic achievement in each of the subject categories. Grades 7 and 8 is a transitional period to high school where, along with the 1-to-4 scale reporting in each subject category, students will also be provided with an overall percentage grade as a summary of learning in each subject.

Grading Scales for Reporting of Academic Achievement

	Grades 1–6	Grades 7–8		Grades 9–12
Performance Descriptors	Reporting on a 1 to 4 scale for each subject category	Reporting on a 1 to 4 scale for each subject category	Overall percentage grade for each subject	Overall percentage grade for each subject
Thorough understanding and in-depth application of concepts and skills	4	4	80–100%	80–100%
Very good understanding and application of concepts and skills	3	3	70–79%	70–79%
Basic understanding and some application of concepts and skills	2	2	60–69%	60–69%
Limited understanding and minimal application of concepts and skills	1	1	50–59%	50–59%

Table 1

Learning Behaviours	
Scale **C**: Consistently – almost all or all of the time **U**: Usually – more than half of the time **S**: Sometimes – less than half of the time **R**: Rarely – almost never or never	
Personal management skills	Uses class time effectively; works independently; completes homework and assignments on time
Active participation in learning	Participates in class activities; self-assesses; sets learning goals
Social responsibility	Works well with others; resolves conflicts appropriately; respects self, others and the environment; contributes in a positive way to communities

Table 2

For high school, reporting of academic achievement is communicated using only the percentage scale as an overall summary of learning in each subject. Although the subject categories are not used for reporting at Grades 9 to 12, they may be applied to instruction and assessment to help ensure that reporting is outcomes-based.

Table 1 summarizes the grading scales and their descriptors, and how they are applied across grades.

The provincial report card at all grades communicates academic achievement separately from learning behaviours. While it is understood that learning behaviours affect academic achievement and, therefore, grades, reporting them separately provides parents with more information about their children's strengths and areas for improvement. This distinction between academic achievement and behaviour further promotes clarity for parents, as well as emphasizes the importance of learning behaviours in terms of how well students succeed in school.

Table 2 presents the learning behaviours that are reported at all grade levels. At Grades 1 to 6, students' behaviour ratings are reported once on each report card, while at Grades 7 to 12 they are reported separately for each subject.

Many schools will begin using the new provincial report card in 2012/2013 on a voluntary basis. All Manitoba public schools will use the provincial report card beginning in the 2013/2014 school year. It is optional for other schools. Training sessions were offered for school divisions last spring, and will continue during the current school year. Parent brochures are also being prepared to support communication to parents and families about the new report card.

Promoting clear and meaningful reporting and conversation gives us an opportunity to develop strong partnerships among students, teachers, and parents. Maintaining these partnerships is key to our continued progress towards achieving Manitoba's vision and mission for a high-quality education for all students.

For more information, please contact

Phyllis Geddert
Assessment Consultant
Telephone: 204-945-4216
Toll-free 1-800-282-8069, ext. 4216
Email: phyllis.geddert@gov.mb.ca

Bruce Lyons
Assessment Consultant
Telephone: 204-945-5008
Toll-free 1-800-282-8069, ext. 5008
Email: bruce.lyons@gov.mb.ca

MTBB Makes Quality Learning Resources Available to Teachers

By Brenda McKinny

The Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTBB) is focused on ensuring that Manitoba educators have easy access to quality resources at the best possible price.

MTBB is also responsible for administering the Curricular Materials Grant fund of $30.00 per pupil, which can be used to purchase curricular materials through MTBB. There is an additional $30.00 per pupil that is provided directly to school divisions to help them acquire curriculum-matched resources for the classroom.

MTBB maintains an online catalogue of learning resources, with an emphasis on those that have been reviewed and recommended by Manitoba Education teacher review teams and/or Western Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP) learning resource review processes. MTBB's role is to maximize Manitoba schools' purchasing power through bulk purchasing, centralized ordering and distribution, and by ensuring that curriculum-matched resources are available to all public schools at the same cost.

Additionally, MTBB ensures that Manitoba Education documents are available after the initial circulation is completed. These include curriculum, support, assessment and policy documents, posters, CD/DVDs, pamphlets, and other media. MTBB works closely with the K–12 educational publishers and product creators, and helps to facilitate special projects to meet the specific needs of the Manitoba curriculum.

Special orders can be placed through MTBB for items not listed in the catalogue. These items must still meet the requirements of the curricular materials definition, as cited at <www.mtbb.mb.ca/catalogue/en/files/mtbb-curricular-materials.pdf>. MTBB continues to work at providing a single window to access learning resources from many educational suppliers with an emphasis on those resources that are relevant to the Manitoba curriculum.

The new MTBB website is launching this fall, with the goal of saving teachers time when selecting resources by containing in one window all of the curriculum-relevant resources offered by many publishers and writers, along with the Manitoba Education materials (print and digital). MTBB hopes that with an improved website and with the continuous review of resources being performed by Manitoba Education, teachers will find their resource selection process to be an easy one.

For more information, or for suggestions and recommendations, please contact
Brenda McKinny
Manitoba Text Book Bureau
Toll-free: 1-866-771-6822
Email: brenda.mckinny@gov.mb.ca

New Grade 12 Math WNCP-recommended resources

Grade 12 Applied Mathematics (40S)
Foundations of Mathematics 12 Nelson Education
MTBB #13623 Student Resource and Online
MTBB #13624 Student Resource and CD-ROM

Grade 12 Essential Mathematics (40S)
MathWorks 12 Pacific Educational Press
MTBB #13515 Student Resource – print version
MTBB #13516 Student Resource – electronic version
MTBB #13517 Student Resource – print & electronic

Grade 12 Pre-Calculus Mathematics (40S)
Pre-Calculus 12 McGraw-Hill Ryerson
MTBB #13626 Student Resource – print version
MTBB #13627 Student Resource – electronic version

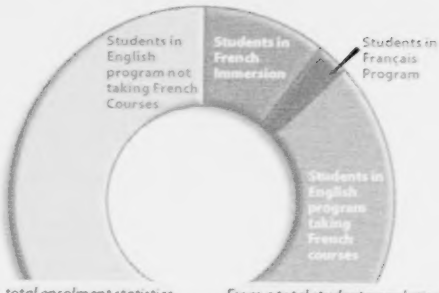
Manitoba Text Book Bureau
1-866-771-6822
Fax: 204-483-5041
www.mtbb.mb.ca

The learning resource store for Manitoba educators!

Learning Another Language: Manitoba's Renewal Strategy

By Florence Girouard and Sandra Drzystek
Bureau de l'éducation française Division

Language is integral to the human experience. It contributes to the cultural and linguistic richness of society, to personal fulfillment, and to mutual understanding. In an increasingly multicultural society, language competencies and intercultural understanding are no longer just optional extras; they are an essential part of being a world citizen.


Students in English program not taking French Courses
Students in French Immersion
Students in Français Program
Students in English program taking French courses

In Manitoba, total enrolment statistics, as of September 30, 2011, show that 5,253 students (2.65% of the student population) were enrolled in the Français program; 20,490 students (10.34% of the student population) in the French Immersion program (an all-time high); and 69,979 students (35.33% of the student population) in French courses (61,586 in public schools and 8,393 in independent schools).

From a total student population of 198,100 students, 102,378 (51.67%) students were neither taking Français (French as a first language program) nor French as a second language (French Immersion program and French courses) in the 2011/2012 school year.

Increased international immigration and migration within Canada has led to an increase in the number of new learners entering school who don't speak English or French. Educators need to be responsive to a world where multilingualism is becoming the expectation rather than the exception, and to adjust the teaching and learning accordingly.

The Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), a division of Manitoba Education, is responsible for French education in Manitoba. BEF is currently rethinking its theoretical foundation for the teaching and learning of French as a second language. To bring about a paradigm shift whereby learning an additional language is an expectation for all students, BEF is presently exploring a methodology for increased student success, and collaborating with educational partners to promote this renewed approach. It is our hope to engage the more than 50% of students who are not, in the current school year, enrolled in a French course or program.

Over the past two years, BEF has been revitalizing Basic French in Manitoba by organizing forums with educators and educational partners. This group is examining four priority areas: curriculum renewal; teacher education—pre-service and in-service; policies and practices; and the promotion of French as a second language. A new guide has been developed using a literacy-based approach with oral communication proficiency as its main focus. Basic French is intended to offer another venue, besides the Français and French immersion school programs, for Manitoba students to develop proficiency in oral communication and in French reading and writing.

Some students have already attained this goal through their Basic French courses, and, as a result, we have videotaped these students to illustrate and clarify expectations for educators, students, and parents. The reaction to these video clips has been overwhelming. Educators are in awe when they see how the proposed methodology can achieve amazing results for students. This is the goal for all Manitoba students, and we know that qualified, trained teachers are the key to this success.

BEF is also rethinking its theoretical foundation related to the French Immersion Program in the province. As French Immersion evolves, it is evident that students need more support in their language learning experience. They believe their French language skills are not good enough and therefore don't feel confident speaking French. Learning another language, though rewarding, is not easy, and the work presently conducted in this area will guide educators and students along this path.

For young people to become engaged in language learning, it is important for them to have a personal connection to the language and to see the language as relevant to their lives. For this to happen, students need to become conscious of their choice to speak and to live in two or more languages. This language learning experience needs to be validated and nurtured by family, peers, and the community. Their personal growth as two-language learners and as two-language users needs to be recognized and celebrated by everyone in their immediate environment in order for them to feel validated for having chosen this path. Students should be encouraged to talk about their language learning experience. They need to be exposed to role models—people who have followed a similar path and succeeded in living in two or more languages. Their family, peers, and community can support and honour language learning by participating in cultural activities and by organizing community events. This new thinking represents the evolution for French immersion education in Manitoba.

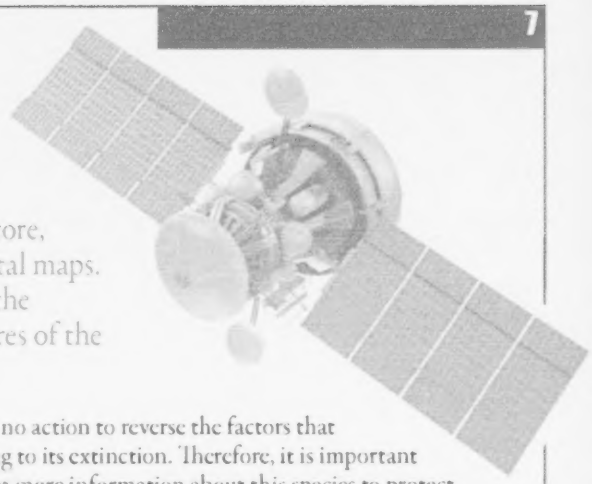
Through the revitalization and rethinking of French language education—both Basic French and French Immersion—in Manitoba, our goal is for students to become more proficient speakers and more aware of their own cultural identity, and to open up to other languages and cultures. This added value is complex, but life-changing: a competency for all Manitoba students, where their identity and their self-esteem are enhanced as they become proud, engaged global citizens.

For more information, contact
Florence Girouard
Directrice
Telephone: 204-945-8797
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8069, ext. 8797
Email: florence.girouard@gov.mb.ca

Sandra Drzystek
Agente d'éducation
Telephone: 204-945-6939
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8069, ext. 6939
Email: sandra.drzystek@gov.mb.ca

Using GIS in Manitoba Classrooms

By Linda Connor
Development Unit, Manitoba Education



Geographic Information Systems (GIS) can be used to store, analyze, and create geographic data and to display digital maps. Students use GIS software to visualize and to analyze the interrelationship between the physical and human-made features of the world.

Using GIS, students can see the interplay between geography and history. For example, students can visualize and assess the construction of Canada's railway systems using GIS map layering.

GIS has been embedded into the Manitoba social studies learning outcomes throughout the curriculum. Early Years students identify geographic regions and landscapes using maps as well as satellite images. In Middle Years, Manitoba students can construct maps using a variety of information sources and technologies such as GIS and GPS. GIS can help Senior Years students study the importance and impact of resources such as fossil fuels, minerals, forestry, and hydroelectricity.

GIS software can also be used in many innovative ways in the classroom. For example, in 2011, Elkhorn School began offering "Introduction to Manitoba's Oil Industry" as part of its course of study in Grade 10 Geography. Christine Winter, a GIS Technician with Manitoba Petroleum Branch, and Steven Hills, a GIS Environmental Technologies instructor at Assiniboine Community College in Brandon, created the GIS lesson. Students learn about many industry-specific details, such as how oil is formed, how it is discovered, and how it is transported, as well as how to use GIS to create maps of oil fields.

Manitoba Model Forest, in collaboration with Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, developed another Grade 10 Social Studies lesson that uses GIS in its study of the boreal woodland caribou. The boreal woodland caribou is considered threatened, which means that it is likely to become endangered if there is no action to reverse the factors that are leading to its extinction. Therefore, it is important to find out more information about this species to protect it, such as where the caribou live throughout the year. In the lesson, students act as GIS analysts who are trying to prepare and analyze boreal woodland caribou locations. This lesson was developed using ArcGIS 9.3 and can be used with more recent versions of the software. For more information on the lesson, contact Tony Viveiros at <antonio.viveiros@gov.mb.ca> or visit <http://prezi.com/qq4atnvdujl8/a-social-studies-gis-lesson-using-local-manitoba-caribou-data/>.

Teachers who are interested in incorporating GIS into social studies lessons can find many useful support materials to help them. Esri Canada, one of the major GIS software companies, has created GIS lesson packs, including lesson plans, teacher presentations, student hands-on tutorials, and student assignments, to help students gain knowledge about topics and issues in social studies, such as acid rain, settlement in Canada, and volcanoes in the world (see <www.esri.ca/teachingmaterials>). Similarly, Parks Canada has produced six lessons to encourage GIS users to create maps to help them understand and appreciate the value of Riding Mountain National Park. These tutorials and lessons can be found on the Manitoba Education website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/gis/index.html>.

Manitoba Education is pleased to announce that it has recently acquired a new provincial licence with Esri Canada. Over 200 schools across Manitoba have already received disks for updated Esri GIS software in both English and French. New GIS lessons and tutorials are under construction. Stay tuned to the Manitoba Education social studies website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/index.html> for valuable, practical GIS updates!

For more information about GIS or to receive a copy of the updated ArcView DVD, contact
Linda Connor
Social Studies Consultant
Telephone: 204-945-0838
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8069, ext. 0838
Email: linda.connor@gov.mb.ca

The Aboriginal Education Research Forum 2012: A Continuing Story of Success

By the staff of the Aboriginal Education Directorate

The 8th annual Aboriginal Education Research Forum (AERF) was recently held in Winnipeg on April 12th, 2012. This event brought together a diverse group of professionals including educators, community leaders, researchers, analysts, civil servants, students, and Elders, among many others. The topic for the conference was "Visioning, Questioning, Exploring, and Creating Respectful Spaces for All Aboriginal/ Indigenous (and Canadian) Identities: Learning from Aboriginal Educational Research and Practice."

Photo by Shaun Gallagher

Dr. Herman Michell, AERF 2012 featured keynote speaker

AERF 2012 featured keynote speaker Dr. Herman Michell, who is originally from the small fishing and trapping community of Kinoosao, on the eastern shores of Reindeer Lake in northern Saskatchewan. Dr. Michell regularly visits pre-service teacher education programs as a guest lecturer on the topic of cultural content inclusion. As principal investigator, his research team recently completed a major federally funded and influential study in 2008 entitled *Learning Indigenous Science from Place: An Action Research Study Examining Indigenous Science Perspectives in Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Community Contexts.*

AERF 2012 also featured two dozen presentations and over 45 speakers across a wide range of topical and important issues in Aboriginal education. A few examples include the following:

- *Journey to Aboriginal Research Protocols – A Partnership in Research,* presented by David Anderson and Karen Rempel: Faculty members from Brandon University and the University College of the North are involved in a community-based research project focusing on Aboriginal perspectives in student success.
- VOICEs: Vital Outcome Indicators for Community Engagement for Children and Youth is a Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) sponsored project that requires all participants to actively engage and apply principles of Aboriginal research protocols. Coming to understand and implement Aboriginal research protocols has required a rethinking of "academia" and the western approach to research. The panel, which consisted of members of the CURA partnership, shared their journey and understandings of Aboriginal research protocols, and how the VOICEs project is being developed to honour Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in developing appropriate community-based indicators for student success.
- *Language Immersion Tepee as a facilitator of the Sámi Language Learning* presented by Satu Uusiautti of the University of Lapland. The Sámi are an Indigenous people whose residential area "Sápmi" expands to the northern regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. As a result of their history of assimilation, the Sámi languages in the Sámi regions of the Nordic countries and Russia are categorized as endangered. The status of the Sámi language in Sámi education was reviewed, and language immersion as a teaching method and as a means of language revitalization was discussed. Sámi language learning is described through the model of the "Language Immersion Tepee," which was adapted from the idea that a pupil advances at an increasingly skillful level of language proficiency through affective, social, cognitive, and practical learning. This model was created to be used in situations where the reality of the Sámi teaching is more diverse than ever: it pays attention to a heterogeneous group of Sámi pupils, the situation of Indigenous peoples' languages, the need for organizational models for learning environments, and differences between pupils' talents and language proficiency levels and the support pupils get from home and society.
- *Building Relationships between Indigenous and Western Science: Creating Practical Science Education at the Secondary and Post-Secondary Levels,* presented by Robert Ouellette: The goal of this presentation was to enable participants to combine Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and western science in the classroom at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Participants were introduced to the foundational philosophies of Indigenous and Western science, and how to take ideas from Indigenous world views and allow them to create a relationship with Western science. Teachers often ask questions of IK and how they can use it in the classroom. "How does one take the philosophy behind Indigenous Knowledge and present that information at the secondary and post-secondary level, helping to prepare students for western-science-related careers, while still showing the seriousness and ingenuity of IK and being respectful of that knowledge?" The goal is for students to be able to pursue further western-based sciences and be successful while being comfortable with Indigenous science as knowledge.

AERF is held annually in April in Winnipeg. To learn more about AERF 2012, visit <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aerf>.

MERN
Manitoba Education Research Network
www.mern.ca
Research Profile
Connecting research in education to policy and practice

Narrowing the Education Gap

By Sherry Peden

Every year, an increasing number of both Aboriginal students and new Canadians enrol in Manitoba schools. These groups often arrive at school with a cultural world view and value system that is far removed from that of many current teachers and school administrators who come from a predominantly Euro-Canadian background. While this cultural diversity can be, should be, and is celebrated and attended to in many provincial schools; if we use graduation rates and school attendance as the measures for academic success, a significant amount of literature suggests that the academic, cultural, and linguistic needs of Aboriginal students are still not being met.

Some economic forecasts suggest that by 2020 the cost of doing nothing more to reduce the education gap between Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students will be in the billions of dollars. These costs will be difficult to pay by our aging, ready-to-retire baby boomer population. Educators and business people alike seem to recognize the necessity and urgency to do more to better address the needs of our growing Aboriginal student population.

Many educational initiatives have been developed in the past 15 or so years with the express purpose of reducing the education gap. My research interests are embedded in and have developed from my studies of the first two years of the implementation of the Aboriginal perspectives course that is now mandatory for teacher certification in Manitoba. Whereas some findings suggest that student teachers who take this course leave with both a willingness and commitment to adapt their teaching, views, and practices to improve how they meet the needs of Aboriginal students; other findings suggest that these same student teachers are hesitant to implement these changes if they are in schools that do not consider Aboriginal perspectives to be a priority. Other findings identify a pressing need for ongoing in-service training and professional development for the existing teacher and administrator body. I continue to be interested in finding better ways to teach this course at both the pre-service and in-service level.

I find that the use of real people sharing real stories and experiences is a useful strategy when attempting to teach about and expose potentially contentious material because, as one Elder noted, "the Canadian history books and education systems have not always been positive about the contributions and value of the First Nations people." Because of this, there is sometimes a resistance (or maybe it is simply a fear) when teachers and administrators who have spent years in a career are asked to do things in a manner that is different and even contradictory to their own value system or world view. Teachers and administrators are typically nurturing people and, when exposed to harsh realities of history such as the residential school era, they often feel a degree of guilt for the actions of their ancestors or for the systems that have been good to them. The reason for having these conversations is not to assign blame, but to develop an understanding of how and why things are the way they are today – the "looking back to see forward" concept that is prevalent in Aboriginal stories and values. This concept was taught to us as we grew up as "You gotta know where you were to know where you are going or can go." Stories are a good way of examining some of these issues.

I have also found that when teachers, parents, and administrators have the opportunity to engage in real dialogue or conversations in a safe atmosphere, there is a willingness to accept and even embrace different ways of doing things to meet the collective needs of our students. As such, I am highly motivated to use whatever skills I have to help develop those bridges, connections, and collaborations whereby authentic dialogues can happen, and whereby stories can be used as one of the strategies to improve how we meet the needs of Aboriginal students in our schools.

For some, this may seem to be a simplistic way to state a research agenda, but my 30-plus years of work in the school system coupled with 10 years or so of university study have shown me that long-term sustainability can only be accomplished with a solid foundation of understanding by all parties involved. As the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba boldly states, "We are all Treaty people." I suggest that, "We all need to work together so that all of our grandchildren will have a positive future, and we can begin that by engaging in the dialogues and collaborations that will then establish the bridges or pathways of action towards that end."

Meegwetch!

Profile — Sherry Peden

Sherry Peden is an arm's-length member of the Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve, located in the western parkland region of Manitoba. She uses the term arm's length because she was raised off-reserve due to Indian Act legislation of the 1950s that prohibited her mother from staying on the reserve after she married. As such, she was raised in what she refers to as "in the bush" on a small subsistence farm.

Sherry spent the past 30 years working in various educational roles that primarily served the northern and Aboriginal community. She began her career as a Middle Years teacher, then an Early Years teacher, a school administrator, a high school teacher and guidance counsellor, and then moved to community-based teacher education. Sherry then went on to coordinate the academic program and field experience for all of the Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Centres.

Sherry then moved on-campus to the Faculty of Education at Brandon University, where she teaches instructional methodology, reading courses, and Aboriginal education courses to Middle and Senior Years teachers. She has also been involved with English language arts and Aboriginal perspectives curriculum development.

Sherry attained her Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Aboriginal Education at the University of Manitoba in October 2011. She is an Associate Professor at Brandon University.

Piloting the New Report Card at Sister MacNamara School

By Kim Midford
Principal, Sister MacNamara School

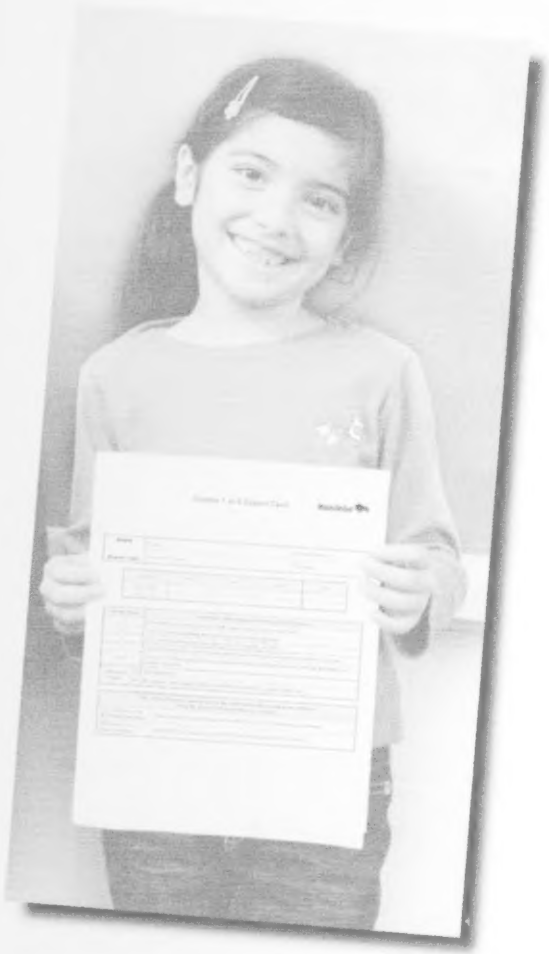
Sister MacNamara is a large inner-city elementary school located in the heart of downtown Winnipeg, a community with great strengths and many gifts.

One of these gifts is its amazing representation of cultures and languages from around the world. It is this diversity that made Sister Mac the ideal site to conduct the pilot study of the new Manitoba provincial report card, and to explore how well it works as a communication tool for parents.

Implementing the new report card has provided professional staff at Sister Mac with an opportunity to build on their interest and enthusiasm for the subjects they teach, and to improve their approaches to student learning. By looking at the curriculum through a new lens, they have been inspired to utilize many of the teaching strategies it provides, and they have strengthened their understanding of the overall curricular objectives.

The new provincial report card has challenged teachers to examine how they communicate each child's learning to families. With its focus on parent-friendly language and format, it includes each child's strengths, challenges, and next steps. Identifying next steps not only helps students see their progress in learning, it also helps parents see how they can support their children's learning at home.

Teachers have many important responsibilities, but one of the most important is communicating with families about their children's learning. At Sister Mac, engaging parents in this process often involves translating written materials and providing interpreters in many different languages at meetings and information sessions. The effort is always worthwhile, however, as the results can be seen in increased student engagement and success.



The new provincial report card has students, educators, and parents thinking and talking about learning together, and that is a very good thing.

Education
MANITOBA

ISSN 0704-2671

Every effort has been made to acknowledge original sources and to comply with copyright law. If cases are identified where this has not been done, please notify Manitoba Education. Errors or omissions will be corrected in a future edition. Sincere thanks to the authors and publishers who allowed their original material to be adapted or reproduced and translated into French.

The newsletter includes articles from the education community and from Manitoba Education. Signed articles appearing in this magazine express the views of their authors and not necessarily those of the Department.

Distribution:

Education Manitoba is distributed free to schools in Manitoba. This newsletter can be viewed online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/newsletter/>.
A similar document has been developed by the Bureau de l'éducation française Division for the Français and the French Immersion Programs.

Contact Information:

We invite contributions to *Education Manitoba*. When forwarding submissions, please include your name and telephone number, and send materials in print and electronic formats to:

Louise Boissonneault
1567 Dublin Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3E 3J5
Telephone: 204-945-1006
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8069, ext. 1006
Fax: 204-945-3042
Email: louise.boissonneault@gov.mb.ca

We also want to hear what you think about our newsletter. Please send your comments, ideas, and suggestions to the address specified above.

Manitoba